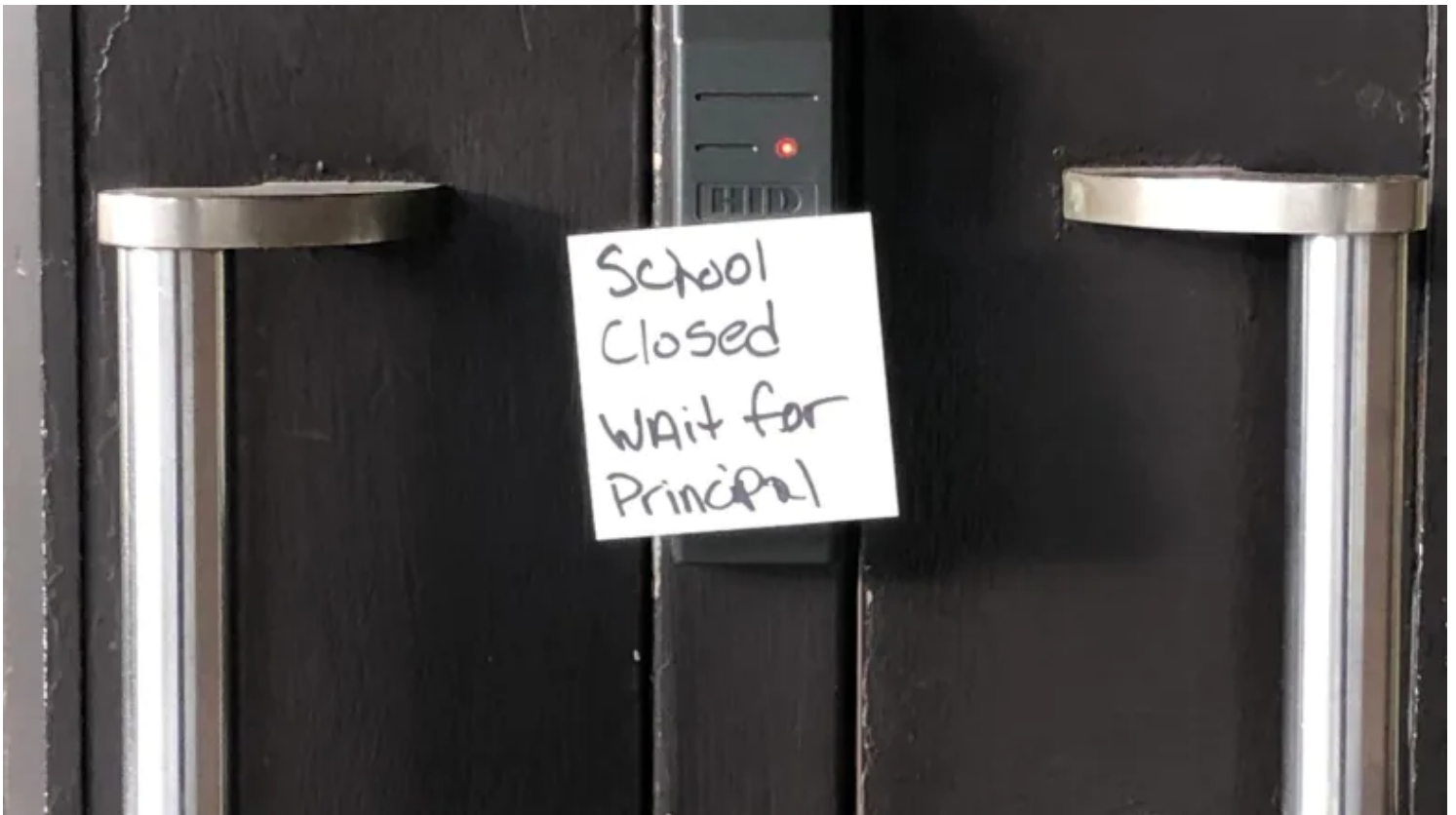


British Columbia

Salmon Arm schools locked and secured after anti-vaccine protesters enter on Friday

Schools to remain locked on Monday

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With schools locked down, students could not enter or leave during the day. (Christopher Mulligan/CBC)

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Schools in and around Salmon Arm, B.C., were put on hold and secure on Friday after anti-vaccine protesters entered them, according to a letter sent to parents from the school district.

The temporary lockdown meant students could not enter or leave school during the day. The school district said schools would be locked in this way beginning Monday, Sept. 20. Parents who want to enter during school hours will need to notify the school, according to the letter.

"We have recently experienced protests at our district office from those opposed to vaccinations and masking," said Donna Kriger, superintendent of School District 83, in the letter sent to parents.

"This [Friday] morning these protesters did something which was completely unacceptable which was, choosing to enter schools in and around Salmon Arm."

- [Reports of assault, verbal abuse as thousands protest vaccine passports outside hospitals across B.C.](#)

Salmon Arm RCMP confirmed that protesters entered a school on Friday and were confronted by a security guard. The protesters left the building before police arrived on scene, after the school's principal informed them they had no right to be there, according to an RCMP spokesperson.

The school district declined an interview request Friday.

In her letter, Kriger said SD83 would be working with RCMP to ensure protests would not reach schools going forward.

'A complete and utter disgrace'

Public Safety Minister Mike Farnworth described what happened in Salmon Arm as "absolutely unacceptable" in a media availability on Friday.

"This is just a complete and utter disgrace. The word 'Covidiot' doesn't even begin to describe how inappropriate the actions of these wack jobs are. It's unacceptable in the extreme," Farnworth said.



Protests first took place at the School District 83 office, pictured here, before protesters showed up at schools. Schools are set to remain locked on Monday, Sept. 20. (Google Maps)

Live Facebook videos filmed by some of the protesters show them confronting health-care workers administering vaccines in a school parking lot, apparently after they had left the school building.

In the videos, the protesters express outrage that children over the age of 12 are allowed to receive the shot without their parents' consent. [Under the Infants Act of 1996](#), "mature minors" can consent to their own medical care providing they fully understand what is involved in that care as well as the risks and benefits.

The protesters are repeatedly told to take their questions to Interior Health and to stop pointing their phone cameras toward the vaccination booth.

The videos also show police arriving on the scene and informing the protesters that they need to keep their distance from the pop-up clinics and respect the privacy and confidentiality of those receiving vaccines.

Education minister

On Saturday, Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside called out the protesters in a statement.

"It is completely unacceptable for people to protest outside of schools, to speak with other people's children and to undermine the decisions they and their families have made regarding the vaccine."

Whiteside commended the work of staff in dealing with the protesters and said that the province is offering assistance to the school district.

The statement said the ministry is in "regular communication" with all districts across the province about COVID-19 guidelines, health measures and any protests on school grounds.

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